1st Anniversary:

It's possible to reduce cholesterol & triglycerides through diet!

In January 2008, my total cholesterol was 244. I was determined not to take a pill for cholesterol. Given that I weighed 210 pounds and am only 5'6" tall, the odds were very good that my cholesterol was related to my being overweight. I went on a strict diet of no animal foods and no junk food for 90 days. In that time period, I lost 15 pounds and my total cholesterol went down to 212.

Although my doctor's physician assistant (now my former doctor's practice) still wanted to prescribe drugs, I decided to stick with dietary changes. I modified my diet to include low fat meats such as chicken or fish or lean beef about twice a week. Over the rest of the year, I've lost 10 more pounds (**a total loss of 25#**). I haven't yet had an opportunity to re-check my cholesterol, but I can't help believing it has to be even better.

Here are the most recent numbers as well as past numbers for comparison. I pigged out over the holidays and this raised the total cholesterol, however, I did not gain weight. This only reinforces the message that it's not just how much you eat; it's also what you eat.

Note: January 2008 is when I started working on my cholesterol reduction project

	January 2008	April 2008	January 2009
HDL (healthier 60mg/dL & above)	53	45	50
LDL (healthier less than 100mg/dL)	156	128	146
TOTAL CHOLESTEROL (healthier less than 200mg/dL)	244	212	228
TRIGLYCERIDES (healthier less than 150mg/\dL)	176	195	*162

Source: American Heart Association @ www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4500

*One very positive result is that the triglycerides continue to decline. I think that this means ... my risk of heart attack and stroke continues to decline.

I should add that I've been taking a yoga class once a week for the past 18 months. My New Year's resolution is to increase my yoga workout to twice a week. So far, I've stuck to my resolution.

Submitted by Carole Rankin, Michigan Department of Corrections

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